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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

apply the moulds, leaving to the painter his proper functions and so economizing his time.

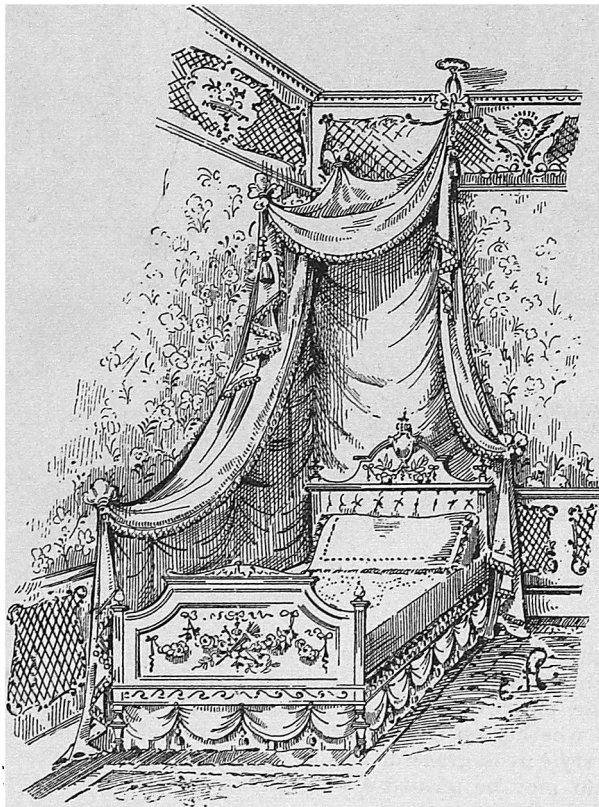
One naturally looks for connecting historic links with the system of painting in gesso independently of the completed type, and we recall the circumstance that the figures on Etruscan vases were outlined with a stylus, the cutting disclosing the pigment that underlay the surface coat. The Moslems covered extensive walls with moulded relief ornaments of almost microscopic minuteness. It need hardly be added that the art of painting in distemper colors mixed with lime on a gesso surface is very ancient. Painting in gesso is just now confined in England to the dwellings of the rich. Its early introduction here is assured, our decorators having apparently been waiting to obtain the details we now supply.

QUAINT CONCEITS IN POTTERY.

“THE Sussex Pig,” is so constructed that it can stand either upon its four legs, in a natural attitude, or upright on its hams and tail; the head lifting off and forming a drinking cup. An example in my own possession is remarkably well formed, and the body is capable of containing a quart of liquor. It is made of a fine clay, and well glazed with somewhat of a “Rockingham” glaze over a delicately mottled surface, which gives it a peculiarly rich and pleasing appearance. When filled and set upright on its tail ready for use, the head serves as a cover or lid, and the forelegs do duty as a handle. The head, when removed for use, forms a good sized and well shaped cup, and the snout becomes a convenient holder. The ears being brought forward they and the snout form three legs for the cup to stand upon.

The “Pig,” thus described, is one of the old institutions of Sussex, and is still occasionally used both at weddings and on other festive occasions, when it takes its place at table as a loving cup. At the former, the body being filled with the liquor, the head is taken off, filled to the brim, and each guest is invited, and expected, to quaff it off, and thus “drink a hog’s-head of ale to the bride’s health.” The heartiness and appropriateness of the toast being, of course, literally carried into effect by drinking from the cup formed head of the ceramic hog. As a loving cup, it is thus passed around, each in succession drinking a “hogshead” of liquor in pledging the bride or an honored guest.

The pig, it may be incidentally mentioned, is recorded as the badge (or, as I have seen it expressed, the crest) of the county of Sussex, as the white horse is that of Kent; and it is said by



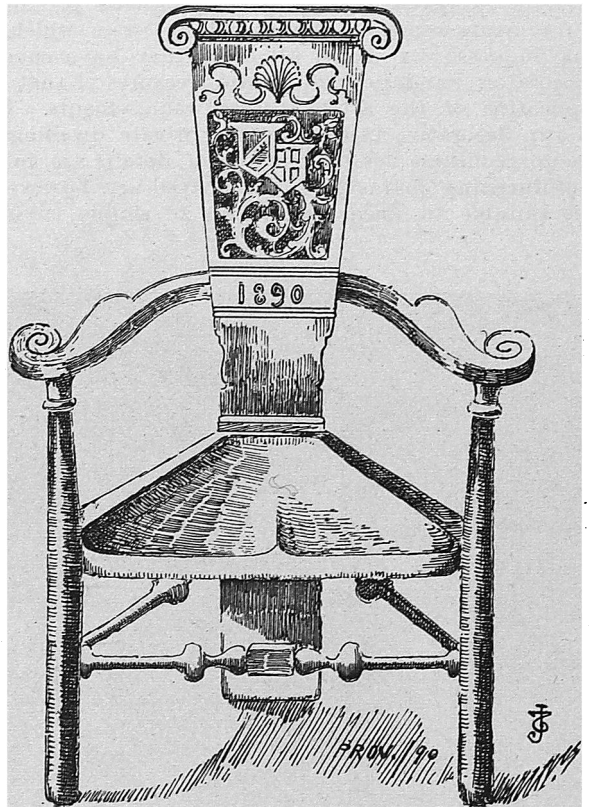
DRAPING OF CORNER BEDSTEAD.

Mr. Egerton, with its appropriate motto, to be attributed to that county as pointing to a temper on the part of its inhabitants which may be either simply obstinacy or that honorable sturdiness of resistance to pressure, which in England produces village Hampdens, and fortunately, when occasion needs, national ones also. The badge or crest is said to be a “Hog” passant, and the motto, “We wun’t be druv.”

The drinking vessels known by the expressive name of “Toby

Fill-pot,” are moulded in form of a short podgy man, with tolerably capacious paunch, dressed in old-fashioned garb, and bearing “cock and pinched hat,” the three pinches of which, one in front over the forehead, and the other two on either side, serve as spouts for pouring out the liquor, while the crown of the hat itself lifts off for use as a cup for drinking from. In some, indeed in most instances, the figure is standing, in others, seated. The dress is, in its form and coloring, in many instances that of the old-fashioned country squire or clergy of a century or more ago, men, say of the “Vicar and Moses” type.

The “Toby Fill-Pot Jugs,” which in all cases appear to have a handle at the back of the figure, are sometimes met with in



HALL CHAIR, DESIGNED BY JAMES THOMPSON.

ordinary earthenware, either of brown body, or covered with a rich brown Rockingham glaze, or of white, or cream colored earthenware, and sometimes even china, more or less richly, and evenly gaudily painted, and now and then gilded. In size they vary from holding a quart or three pints down to a lesser capacity; and the design was, in some instances adopted for jugs of quite a small size. In my own possession, besides the larger ones, are two or three, the smallest of which is only three inches in height.

“Here, gentlemen, come try your skill,
I’ll hold a wager, if you will,
That you don’t drink this liquor all,
But you will spill, or let some fall.”

Such is an exact transcript of the invitation conveyed in incised letters on the side of a “puzzle-jug” now before me, and of which, with slightly varied verbal differences, many examples have come under my notice. The invitation embodying the offer of a “bet” is, of course, addressed to the novice, who, being unaware of the difficulties to be overcome by hidden perforations and other subtle contrivances, considers himself quite capable of quaffing the liquor in safety, and at the same time winning the wager which has been laid. The task, however, like many other, although seemingly simple, was difficult of accomplishment, and the would-be toper usually found himself the loser of the bet and of the price of the liquor.

I have thought—so curious and varied are these singular vessels—that a few words regarding them, and others which I purpose from time to time to give upon other grotesque productions of the potter’s art, would help to induce attention to be paid to these out-of-the-way objects.

Puzzle-jugs are of considerable variety in construction, and in body and ornamentation range from the most crudely decorated common brown ware to the artistically painted cream ware, or even porcelain; but whatever difference there may be in form, construction, or ornament, the one general principle remains the same, that of making it difficult to drink the liquor without losing some of it by trickling or spilling through some of the perforations with which they are furnished. The “puzzle” in all cases is to quaff the contents of the “jug” without losing a single drop, and this, as a rule, can only be done by a peculiar way of arranging the fingers so as to cover up all the orifices except one; and then, by sucking, draw the liquor through that one.